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ABSTRACT

To illustrate possible dangers of "exit" as a teacher option, questions about labor relations and work role perceptions were given to teachers from three California districts. The canonical correlation technique measures teacher role perceptions against organizational conditions and labor relations beliefs. A figure shows three variates: organizationally engaged teachers; teachers who are organizational isolates; and frustrated teachers who, like the isolates, believe individual responsibility more important than organizational loyalty. Further, categorical variables reveal that younger teachers are associated more with the third variate, and that the first variate is associated more with female teachers. Teacher-work perceptions markedly differ in relation to four ideal-type work structures--labor, craft, professional, and art. For example, third variate teachers are best described as frustrated artists. First-variate teachers are more accepting of criticism, whereas second-variate teachers define their work as autonomous and embody the "exit" rather than "voice" response in reaction to organizational stress. Variate-three teachers feel independent in their work but have a less firm sense of vocation than variate-two teachers. That self-defining and frustrated teachers tend toward "exit" has serious consequences for teacher unionism's future, since variate-one teachers represent the dominant "voice" in the school but lack the willingness to define and defend their occupation. (KS)

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Exit and Voice in Teacher Work Perceptions

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It has been commonly understood that the major problem in teacher labor relations has been accommodating and legitimating teacher voice. The problem of legitimate opposition has long fascinated scholars, and work in this area was particularly in evidence during the period when teachers and other white collar workers began to unionize (Lieberman, 1956; Corwin, 1970, Kleingartner, 1967). It was generally supposed that voice and suppression of voice were the options available in the system, and that the fundamental problem was to provide avenues for voice, to protect and sanction it, and to provide some influence balancing mechanism for those parties accorded legitimate voice -- particularly the teachers and the administration. However, this conception of the problem overlooks the extreme ease with which teachers can withdraw from, or never engage in a fight; the ease with which they can define themselves and their work in terms that essentially ignore the organization for which they work. In Hirschman's (1970) terms, they choose exit over voice.

This analysis illustrates the potential dangers of exit as an option for teachers, in a somewhat different way than Hirschman considered them, but the problem remains the same. Hirschman, it may be remembered, was concerned with the problem of organizational decline and alternative services. Hirschman's interest was peaked by the observation that competition from trucking had failed to spur the state operated Nigerian railway system to offer better, more reliable service. He proposed the following explanation:

> The presence of a ready alternative to rail transport makes it less, rather than more, likely that the weakness of the railways will be fought rather than indulged. With truck and bus transportation available, a deterioration in rail service is not nearly so serious a matter as if the railways held a monopoly for long-distance transport (p. 44).

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Customers who needed services the most, and who were therefore potentially the most vocal, were the first to abandon the railroad in favor of trucking. Absent this political pressure, and protected from economic pressure, the railroads continued to decline.

In the case of school teachers, the problem of exit is joined somewhat differently. There are certainly good school teachers who overtly exit to seek other work, enough so that the matter is of national policy concern. But the characteristics of teaching work are also unusually, perhaps uniquely, well suited to exiting through psychological disengagement from the organization. This has been recognized as a mental health or "burnout" issue and as an organization or "malaise" issue. It also becomes a fundamental labor relations problem.

If one turns to the early works on teacher unionism, one inevitably finds that changing the occupation and gaining control of it was a primary objective. Corwin called both the process and his book "militant professionalism." But as we look at the choices made by these teachers we see those with the strongest self-concept of their work are also those with the lowest opinions of their unions, administrations, and school boards. They are much more likely to exit than fight.

The Field Study

The study involved 439 teachers from 10 schools in three Southern California school districts, called Albright, Gateway City and Point George. The questionnaire (Appendix A) was distributed in faculty meetings, and thus response was nearly universal. In one elementary school with a year-around schedule, about one-quarter of the staff was on vacation, and in one high school about 10 teachers declined to participate. During each questionnaire administration, teachers were asked to volunteer for interviews, and about 80 teachers did volunteer. Interviews of approximately 45 minutes were conducted, approximately 20 of them at school sites and 60 over the telephone. In addition, principals, central office personnel, and union leadership were interviewed.

In addition to some categorical variables, the survey instrument that the teachers completed contained two major sections. The first contained 7-point Likert-type questions about labor relations, particularly the teacher's perception of the union, the administration, and the school board. For example, teachers were asked to agree or disagree with the

statement, "The teachers organization is strong and well organized." The second contained questions about teacher's work role perceptions. These questions were arranged as forced choices between two opposing concepts along an 8-point scale. For instance, teachers were asked to choose between a description of their work as "largely autonomous" or "largely directed by others."

Gateway City Unified is a K-12 district of about 20,000 students, 90 percent non-white. The teachers are experienced, some 450 of them having taught for more than 16 years. The school board and central administration are stable, and the teacher union is well accepted and well run. All 22 principals report directly to the superintendent. The Albright district has about the same enrollment and also has a high percentage of minority students. The union has had stable leadership, but the school board turnover is frequent, contentious, and chaotic, and superintendents don't last long either. Point George is a high school district of about 7,000 racially mixed students. It engages in a "cooperative mode" of labor relations heavily involving teachers in decision making and playing substantial attention to teacher complaints and grievances but outside of the conventional contract administration process.

Labor Generations and Work Role Defintions

The idea of Generations or discrete stages in school labor relations was introduced in earlier research, and we have found the idea useful in distinguishing both school district actions and individual perceptions (Kerchner and Mitchell, 1981). The Generations are important because they represent three distinct ideas around which unionism develops:

1. the Meet-And-Confer Generation in which the union talks with management but is not considered legitimate as an independent bargaining agent,

2. the Good Faith Bargaining Generation, in which management comes to accept the legitimacy of an independent union and in which both parties strive, first, to moderate conflict and, second, to accommodate one another,

3. the Negotiated Policy Generation, in which the contract becomes an explicit instrument of policy.

Between these Generations there are two intergenerational periods of intense social, ideological, and political conflict. At issue

during the conflict periods are fundamental questions of the central idea and purpose of unionism, and thus the beliefs of individuals who depart from the central belief system are of great importance because they often lead the struggle over redefinition.

Teaching Work Roles. All jobs have two characteristic features. First, every job has some system of "task definition" to specify the particular activities workers are expected to perform. And second, all have some sort of "oversight mechanism" for monitoring the performance of these tasks.

Some tasks are structured primarily through rationalization, preplanning by either workers themselves or their managers, and routine enactment of standard operating procedures. In other job settings, however, tasks are primarily adaptive -- requiring extensive accommodation to unexpected or unpredictable elements rather than those embodied in a pre-planned program.

Some jobs are overseen directly, either through close supervision, product inspection, or stringent reporting requirements. Workers are monitored by assessing how they perform required tasks. In other types of jobs oversight is indirect. Workers' preparation and skill -- that is, their ability to perform the work -- are the prime consideration. The work itself is frequently uninspected, but rather the worker is licensed or certified prior to being allowed to perform the work.

Four Work Types. Four ideal-type work structures are created with the basic task definition systems and oversight mechanisms are created. All real jobs are, of course, a mixture of the four. "Labor" (the upper left hand cell in Figure 1) is the term which best describes work where tasks are rationally planned and oversight is undertaken by direct inspection. The use of the word labor here has nothing to do with a worker's status as a union member, nor is it intended as a term of denigration. Labor is simply a type of work.

Craft workers differ from labor workers because they are generally freed from direct supervision but held responsible for selecting and applying appropriate specialized techniques to their work. Managers or clients establish the overall objective of the work, but once a craft worker takes an assignment he/she is expected to carry it out without needing detailed instructions or close supervision. Craft workers are expected to know and defend the use of the proper techniques and procedures, and they are expected to risk insubordination by refusal to apply techniques inappropriately.

Figure 1

Ideal-Type Classification of Work Structures

TASK DEFINITION	INSPECTION OF WORK: Direct Inspection of work in process or work product	INSPECTION OF WORK: Indirect Inspection through license or other examination before a practitioner is allowed to begin work.
Preplanning	LABOR	CRAFT
Adaptive	ART	PROFESSION

Professional workers are also expected to possess a set of learned and specialized techniques. But in addition, professionals are expected to analyze or diagnose situational factors and adapt their working strategies to the true needs of the client. A craft worker knows whether a task can be performed; a professional decides whether it *should* be. Thus, profession typically involves the withdrawal of the organization or the state as the direct overseeing body and involved the legitimation of "private government" among employees.

Art work involves both adaptive task definitions and direct monitoring of workers' activities. Typically, the work of solitary artists, novelists and painters for example, are evaluated through inspection and critical review of individual consumers, juries, and reviewers. Organized artistic ventures, such as the design of large buildings or the production of plays and symphonies, are closer in form to teaching. Here, the creation of art depends on close coordination and direction of the process as well as sensitive review and critical evaluation. While competence in applying specific techniques may be important, it is not the ultimate concern. Artists are expected to rise above the limits of established conventions when necessary, and to develop novel, unconventional and unexpected

responses to situations they encounter.

Canonical Analysis of Work Roles

A statistical technique was needed to associate teaching role perceptions against both the organizational conditions and the labor relations beliefs of those teachers. Canonical correlation is such a technique. Canonical correlation is essentially a generalization of multiple regression in the sense that it relates several predictors to several criteria. Just as regression yields a set of weights that are a best estimate of the criterion variable, canonical correlation generates one or more pairs of canonical variates for the predictors and criteria. These variates are calculated to maximize the correlation between the paired linear composite from each set. Just as in factor analysis, "loadings" are created through the correlation of each composite variate with its original set of variables (Darlington, Wineberg and Walberg, 1973). In this case, canonical analysis revealed three significant canonical correlations: .497, .461, and .394 of significance $p < .000$, .000, and .0136 respectively using Bartlett's test. The variates and their loadings are presented in Figure 2.

However, some caution must be used in analysis. In canonical correlation the strength of the variates can be judged according to how much of the variance in a set can be accounted for the variate from the other set (Levine, 1977). The averaged sum of squared elements in a set is the proportion of the trace of the set captured in that variate. The percentage of the variance or trace accounted for by the canonical variates is quite modest.

Figure 2

Canonical Loadings of Work Descriptors and Their Predictors

	Scale Items (Low end/ High end)	Canonical Variates 1	2	3
Work Role Perceptions				
B1	Autonomous/other directed	.022	-.460	.498
B2	Standard practices/ different situations	.015	.659	.223
B3	Situationally responsive/ carefully planned	.235	.175	.353
B4	Independent/part of organization	.566	-.247	-.099
B5	Uncooperativenes v. incompetence as threat	.623	.426	.255
B6	Individual differences/ loyalty to program	-.004	.030	-.318
B7	Poor management/ time spent frivolously	-.205	-.169	.253
B8	School loyalty/ individual responsibility	.044	.250	.487
B9	Dedication and effort/ care and precision	-.239	.301	.099
B10	Group togetherness/ enforcing high standards	.021	.215	-.015
B11	Expertise and precision/ flexibility and accuracy	.273	.038	.100
B12	Resist interference/ accept criticism	.443	.053	.235
	Percent of the trace	.095	.096	.081

Figure 2, continued

Canonical Loadings of Work Descriptors and Their Predictors

Scale Items	Canonical Variates 1	2	3
Predictor Variables			
--Labor Relations Perceptions			
Labor conflict level	.305	-.042	-.117
Teacher organization:			
...strong, well-organized	.053	.127	-.283
...successful	.560	.172	-.348
...competent leadership	.565	.074	-.203
...acts responsibly	.559	.200	-.077
...tries to influence board	.504	.190	-.219
...supports candidates	.419	.406	-.260
...tries to influence legislature	.188	.124	-.246
...tries to influence parents	.187	-.038	-.218
...increases pay, benefits	.512	.157	-.220
District administration:			
...successful	.558	-.148	-.387
...responsible with teachers	.577	.014	-.342
...innovative	.498	-.291	-.270
School Board:			
...organized, efficient	.588	-.099	-.208
...high conflict	-.156	.179	.184
...open decision making	.508	.023	-.127
...accepts union legitimacy	.552	.145	-.274
...satisfied w. teach. relat.	.476	.266	-.084
--Categorical descriptions			
Years taught	-.181	-.172	-.284
Elementary teacher	.406	-.283	.235
High School teacher	.351	.132	-.224
Gender (M= 1, F= 2)	.419	-.165	.007
Gateway City	.577	.030	.083
Albright	-.349	.286	.041
First Generation	-.162	-.234	.273
1st Intergeneration Conflict	-.309	.002	-.076
Early Second Generation	-.215	.088	.350
Late Second Generation	.453	.101	-.336
Percent of the trace	.180	.030	.052

As one can see in Figure 2, the first variate created from the teacher work role perceptions set accounts for less than 10 percent of the variation in the second set. The variate from the labor relations perception and environmental variables accounts for 18 percent of the variance in the first set. The percentage of the trace for the second and third variates is even more modest.

The Three Variates. The three variates present quite different perceptions of teaching work and labor relations, and these variates help illustrate how labor relations changes and how unanticipated changes in teacher work roles may occur. The first variate presents a picture of mutual accord and organizationally engaged teachers. They are the mainstream. The teachers union is thought to be successful in dealing with school management, competently lead, and potent in increasing wages and benefits. But the administration and school boards are also considered successful, responsive, and innovative. The board recognizes the legitimacy of the teachers union, and its proceedings are not characterized by high conflict. The second variate represents teachers who are organizational isolates, those who have a firm sense of their work exclusive of the organization. While they are not necessarily hostile toward the school district, they give both it and the union lower ratings on success and organization than do the teachers in the first variate. The third variate can be seen as representing frustrated employees. They do not think the district for which they work is successful or well organized, and their perceptions of the teachers union are similarly negative. Along with the teachers in the second variate, they tend to share a belief that individual responsibility is more important than organizational loyalty, but at the same time they feel their work is being directed by others. They also believe that the school board does not recognize their union as legitimate.

Additional understanding can be gained from examination of the categorical variables at the bottom of Figure 2. The association with number of years taught is not strong, but younger teachers are associated somewhat more with the third variate than the first or second. Both elementary and high school teachers load strongly on the first variate, and high school teachers do not load on the third. Elementary teachers are not associated with the second variate. (Because of the statistical requirement of not including all the categories of a dummy variable, the category of "middle and junior high school" was not included.) The first variate is much more associated with female teachers than the second. Because of the statistical requirement only two of the three districts could be represented in the canonical correlation, thus Pt. George does not appear. Gateway City is particularly attached to the perceptions of the first variate and

Albright associated with the second. Neither district loads strongly on the third variate.

As to generational assignments, Late Second Generation teachers load more strongly on the first variate. The First Generation and Early Second Generations are positively associated with the third variate. No generation is particularly associated with the second variate. Thus, given our sample of teachers, we find an organizational definition of work, one accepting of both inspection and dedication more associated with the later stages of generational development.

Variates and Work Perception

Given these stark differences in teacher labor relations perceptions, it is not surprising that there would be marked differences in teacher work perceptions particularly in relationship to the four ideal types -- labor, craft, art and profession. (Figures 3 and 4 plot the canonical loadings on the three variates.)

First of all there is a commonality among the three variates, that which may be interpreted as a *common core of craft*. Variables B3 and B5 each load positively on all three variates. Variable B5 asks respondents to judge whether a "lack of cooperation," or "teacher incompetence" pose the greatest threat to a high quality educational program. The respondents picked teacher incompetence as the greater threat, an answer indicative of a craft perception of teaching rather than a labor perception. Variable B3 asks whether teaching is "mainly being responsive to situations" or "mainly being carefully planned." Careful planning, in this case a choice of labor and craft over art and profession, was favored by teachers in all three variates. Outside of this common belief, however, there are substantial differences.

The first variate depicts teaching as an organizationally involved and intense activity, one which embraces the responsive nature of work and the direct inspection of its process or product. The variables that were uniquely emphasized in the first canonical variate tended to be those associated with teaching as a directed activity, in the work role nomenclature a combination of labor and art. Variables B4 and B9 load strongly on the first variate and load with an opposite sign on the second variate. Question B4 asks respondents to choose between characterizing teachers as independent and part of the organization. Those loading on the first variate strongly chose

an organizational perception of work, a choice characteristic of art or labor rather than craft or profession. In addition, first variate teachers are more accepting of criticism (B12) than others, particularly second variate teachers. Question B9 asks whether "dedication and effort" rather than "care and precision" are more central to good teaching, and those who are associated the first variate choose "dedication and effort." In addition, one variable associated with a choice of profession over craft loaded on both variates. Question B11 asked whether good teaching required the application of proper techniques, one of the key elements craft, or accuracy in diagnosis, one of the key elements in profession. Diagnosis was favored.

The second variate workers, favor many of the characteristics of profession. But their strongest characteristic is in the definition of their work as unique (B2) and autonomous (B1). This variate can be interpreted as embodying the response of "exit" rather than "voice" in reaction to organizational stress (Hirschman, 1970). In addition, the teachers in variate two differed sharply from those in variate one by choosing independence (B4) over organization and "care and precision" over "dedication and effort" (B9). Both of these choices favored the craft/profession axis over the labor/art axis. Finally, the second variate shares with the third a choice of individual responsibility rather than school loyalty as the most important determinant of work role (B8).

The third variate teachers are best characterized as frustrated artists. They are the leaders and the laggers, those who feel that the union hasn't helped very much or that it needs to be better organized. The school district they work for is hapless, too. They have a less firm and independent sense of vocation than the teachers in variate two, and thus, they are isolated and at the same time they feel pressed by their organization.

The question of autonomy versus other directed work (B1) is answered strongly in favor of other directed work, in contrast to the teachers in variate two. At the same time, variate three teachers share with variate one an acceptance of criticism as opposed to a defense of their independence (B12). And they feel highly independent in their work. Variable B6 loaded negatively pointing to the individual differences in work and variable B8 loaded positively indicating a preference for an individual response rather than organizational loyalty. Thus, variate three teachers feel a tension between their expressed independence and the apparent other-direction of their work.

The perceived openness of work to inspection is juxtaposed against a belief that the worker is responsible for the outcome. Question B7 asks whether failure to achieve failure was suggestive of bad management, an answer associated with a

management's ultimate responsibility for outcomes under a laboring definition, or with teacher time frivolously spent, an answer associated with a failure of artistic work. Third variate teachers chose the latter response.

Figure 4

Plot of Work Role Canonical Loadings on Variates I and III

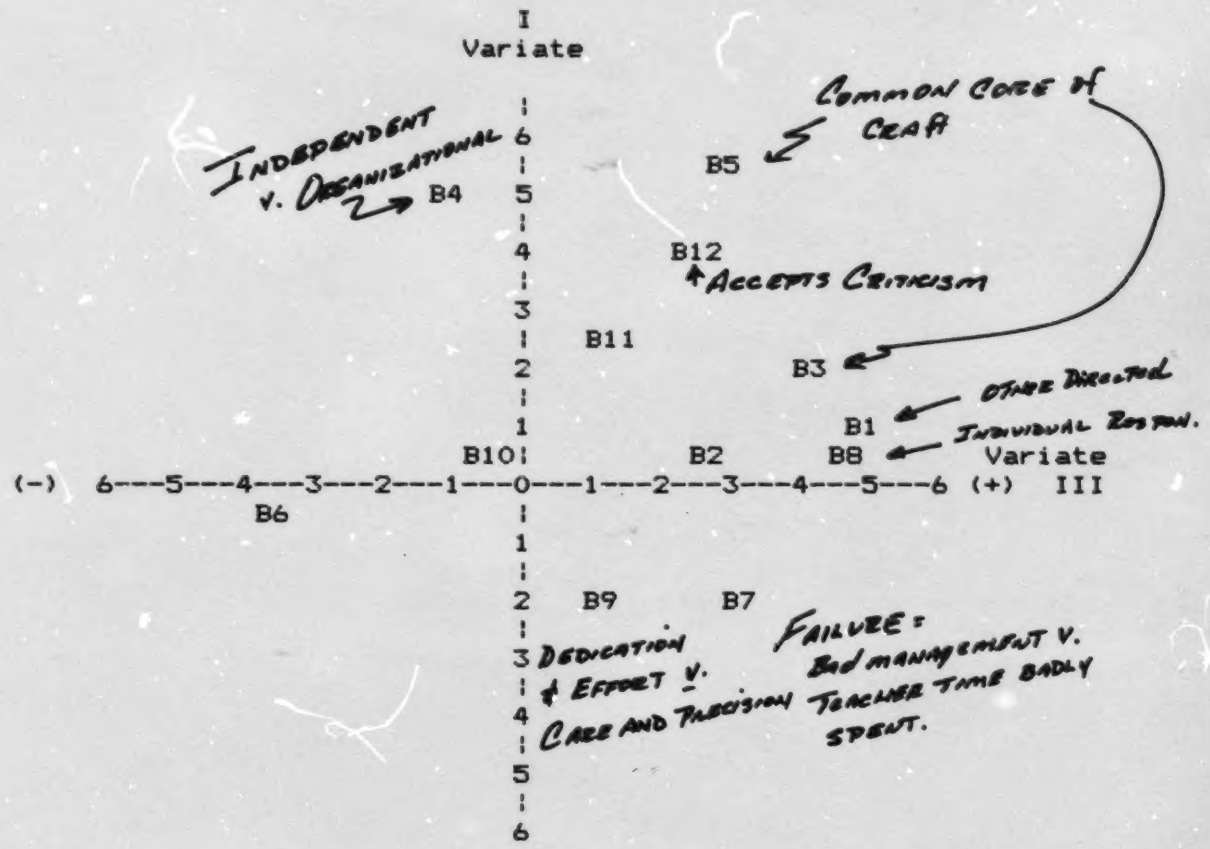
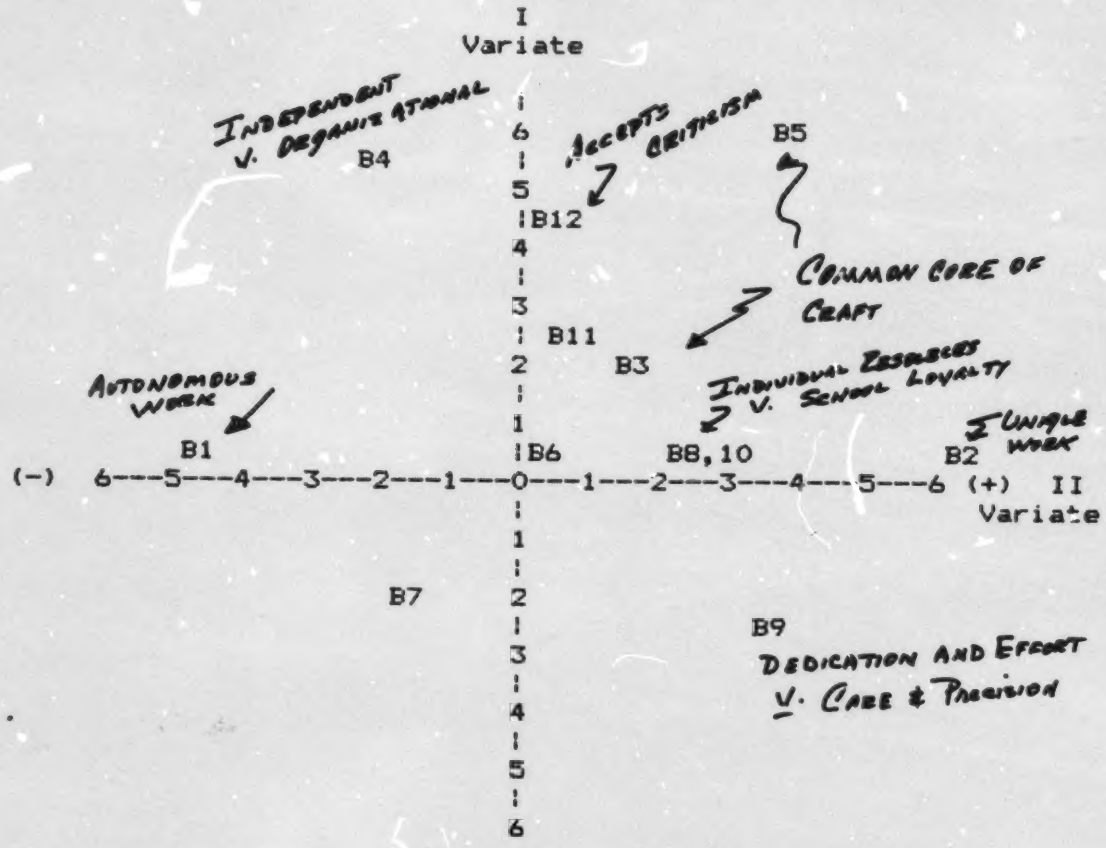


Figure 3

Plot of Work Role Canonical Loadings on Variates I and II



The Import and Dangers of Exit

The problem of exit is illustrated if we look again at the three variates. First variate teachers are a comfort to the organization. They are loyal, they accept the importance of craft techniques, and they believe that they need to be responsive to criticism. They lack, however, the ability to defend and define their occupation.

The worker-definition of occupation was what Corwin refers to as militant professionalism, which in his terms involved defining ones occupation in other than bureaucratic terms. "The process of professionalizing publically supported vocations, then, is likely to be militant, representing a challenge to the traditional ideologies of control by laymen and their administrative representatives" (Corwin, 1970:9). The process of changing occupations was seen as central to unionism. It was always assumed that if teachers gained the ability to give voice to their occupational complaints, they would proceed to use voice. Instead, as in any case where voice and exit are both available, the most passionate and sometimes the most quality conscious are the first to withdraw.

When one considers the professionalization of teaching, one of the essential ingredients is the willingness to define and defend the occupation against outsiders, particularly laymen, and to embrace legitimation of collective worker control of standards, accountability, review, and the like. The values essential to support this are present among the second variate teachers define their occupation, but because they do so in isolated terms, they are less likely to press for a kind of corporate professionalism, a explicit withdrawal from authority by administrators and boards than was suggested by the phrase militant professionalism. They are individual practitioners in a corporate world.

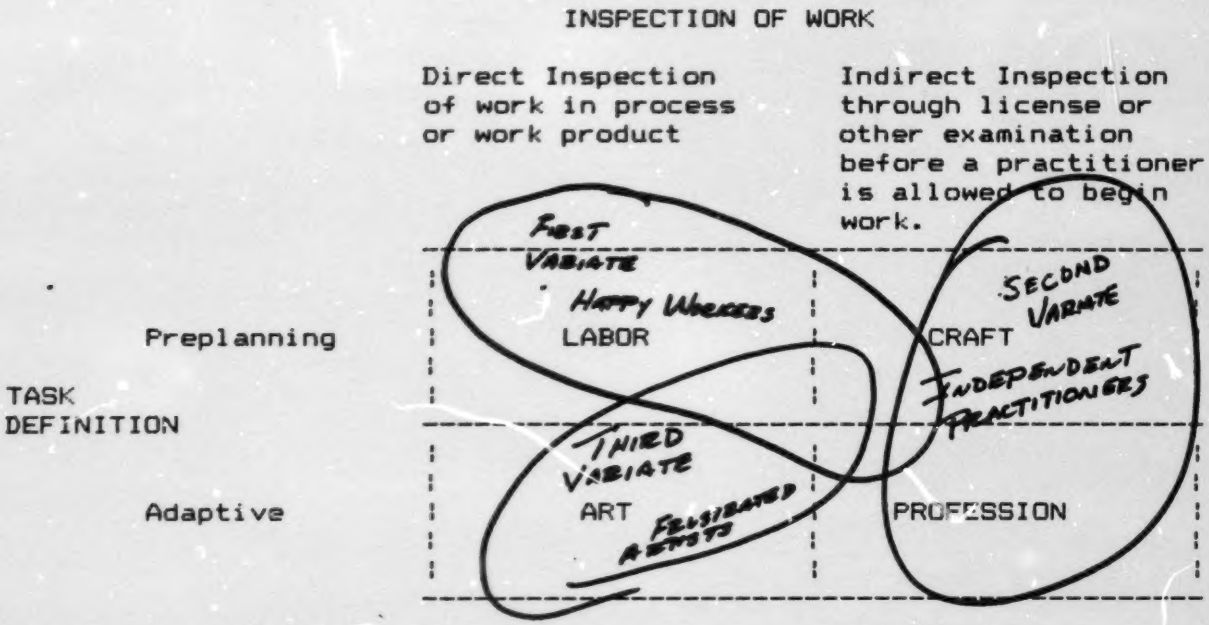
The third variate teachers are angry and frustrated. The see themselves constrained by the organization, their work requiring a situational response yet being dictated by the school organization. Their responses suggest that they would fight, but for the fact that their confidence in the union is just as low as their opinion of the school district and the school board. Our interviews suggest, some are former militants who feel that the union failed to live up to its expectations, and others thought unions were a mistake in the first place. They are unlikely to be effective organizers.

The Future of Unionism. The tendency and ability of the self-defining and the frustrated teacher to exit has serious consequences for the future and direction of teacher unionism. Ultimately, we have found, school districts learn to master their relations with teacher unions. They train administrators, socialize school board members and eventually move toward using labor relations as a means of controlling policy. They learn to coordinate and accommodate teacher unions and may gain the upper hand in conflict with them. But given the bureaucratic imperative for rationalization of work, administrations are highly unlikely to organizationally recognize adaptive teaching work structures which embrace the critical elements of art and profession.

For the several decades following the Progressive Era reforms when school superintendents dominated teacher organizations, the primary teaching policies were designed to shape teaching as craft. Teacher certification and curriculum planning became synonymous with a well-run school.

Figure 5

Variates of Work Perceptions As Combinations Of Ideal Types



If there is to be organizational support for teaching work roles that recognize flexibility in a way other than the incomplete enactment of bureaucracy, then it will have to come from the teachers themselves. For teachers, unions have been the

"the only wheel in town." But the unions' ability to undertake the role of shaping work is highly limited by the extent to which those teachers who feel strongest pull toward self-identification in work or frustration with the school bureaucracy can withdraw.

The lack of voice represented by variates two and three removes the pressure to balance work definitions among the four ideal types of work -- labor, craft, art and profession. We can visualize the work of these teachers as anchored in a common perception of craft (see Figure 5). The second variate linked teach externally to notions of craft and profession particularly in the strains of standards and standard setting. The third variate links art to craft feeling but resisting the pressures for organizational control. The first variate links labor to craft.

If the second and third variate teachers excercise the exit option, defining their work as independent and their lives as isolated from both school and union, and the interview responses from these teachers suggests that they do, then the dominant voice in the school is left to variate one teachers. These teachers possess the cooperativeness necessary to make school a pleasent place; they have a common belief in craft, and they believe in caring and integration. But the essential willingness to define and defend an occupation appears not to be present.

One expects these teachers to be less strident and articulate about voice in the face of efforts to rationalize and inspect teaching. Without this voice, the issues around which unionization proceeds are going to be essentially protective -- the expansion of procedural due process and the blockage of harsh evaluation and employee discipline. If idea of unionism is equated only with protection by its members, then there is no voice to advocate that teaching work needs to be something other than rationalized, preplanned and directly inspected by others -- an act of labor.

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